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COMMUNICATIONS ALLIANCE LAUNCHES PROJECT TO HELP PLAN MOVE TO NEXT GENERATION OF THE INTERNET

Commissions study into Australia's IPv6 transition challenges

Sydney, 11 September 2008 – Communications Alliance today announced a study designed to provide greater insight into the challenges facing Australia as it moves into the next generation of the Internet.

As the current Internet technology platform – Internet Protocol version 4 (IPv4) – nears the end of its lifecycle, planning is underway for the global migration to Internet Protocol version 6 (IPv6), which will provide major advantages for government, business and consumers.

However the transition to the new platform will also generate complex challenges for service providers, equipment and application vendors as well as customers.

Communications Alliance has identified the IPv6 migration as an issue where the industry can provide leadership in assisting to make the transition as smooth as possible.

As a first step in this process, Communications Alliance has commissioned leading consultancy Market Clarity to undertake a comprehensive study to assess Australia's readiness to adopt IPv6, including what obstacles exist and what needs to be done in the migration process.

Communications Alliance CEO Anne Hurley said the initiative was an ideal example of how the industry could assist the nation to extract maximum value from the opportunities afforded by new technologies.

"Clear evidence points to a need to act on this issue now and our industry, through Communications Alliance, wants to play a proactive role in helping to achieve a smooth transition," Ms Hurley said.

"Australia cannot afford to be a laggard in embracing the opportunities that will be available across the board as the new generation of the Internet takes hold. Equally, we cannot afford to ignore the potential pitfalls of mishandling the migration.



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“By understanding our readiness for the transition and identifying the obstacles, we will be able to manage the changes to our national advantage. ”

The project will involve interviews with key stakeholders including:

- The Federal Government
- Telecommunications carriers with IP-based data services (including consumer broadband);
- Internet service providers with significant network infrastructure;
- Equipment vendors;
- Application providers (including VoIP providers and application hosts).

In support of this initiative, Communications Alliance will also seek to garner helpful information about IPv6 issues and make it available on its website.

Included in this information will be a tracking tool called IPv4 Exhaustion Counter that counts down the number of available IPv4 Internet addresses and estimates the number of days before they will run out. The limited availability of Internet addresses using IPv4 is the most pressing driver for the move to IPv6. The new IP platform will expand the address space from its current limit of around four billion to over 300 trillion trillion addresses.

In addition, IPv6 will allow many more classes and hierarchies of Internet addresses, allow better quality of service features to support multimedia and other sophisticated applications, provide greater security and improved efficiency.

Ms Hurley, who is also President of the National ICT Industry Alliance (NICTIA), said successful adoption of IPv6 would contribute to the Government's objective of increasing effective use of the Internet to drive higher productivity growth and community participation in the digital economy.

NICTIA's 10 year Strategic Vision statement, released last year, identified that Australia needs to “be one of the first nations to gain the benefits from migrating to IPv6”.



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About Communications Alliance

Communications Alliance was formed to provide a unified voice for the Australian communications industry and to lead it into the next generation of converging networks, technologies and services.

For further information see www.commsalliance.com.au

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